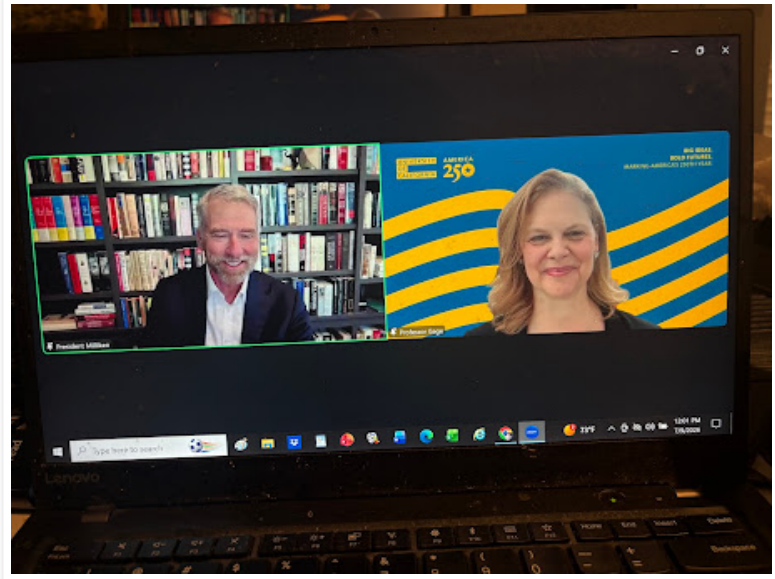
UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Friday, July 10, 2026

Another Milliken Interview



UC President Milliken did one of his interviews, this time with Yale historian Beverly Gage, on July 9. The rationales for the interview were a) the 250th anniversary of American independence and b) the Yale report on higher education's standing in public opinion that has garnered national attention.

Professor Gage discusses a roadtrip around the USA to visit sites of historical significance (including Disneyland) and the significance of the Yale report. You can find the one-hour conversation at:

https://ia902809.us.archive.org/1/items/newsom-7-1-2026-savings-accounts-for-kids/Milliken-Gage%20interview%207-9-2026.mp4. [Audio with still picture.]

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:35 AM No comments:

Labels: Milliken, UC, Yale

TMT

From time to time, we look at the status of the Thirty-Meter Telescope (TMT) project on Hawaii. UC is involved in the project, along with other institutions. The issue sometimes comes up at public comments during UC Regents meetings. Perhaps it will at the upcoming July meetings. As blog readers will know, the project was stalled by local opposition

From Hawaii News Now: *Dozens of people — including tribal leaders, members of Mauna Kea Education and Awareness from Hawaii Island and others — delivered a petition... opposing construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope on Maunakea to the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation in Palo Alto, California, which had committed $250 million to the project. The group also delivered a copy of a cease-and-desist letter that had been sent to TMT. "Over 500,000*

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

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- Defend Research Funding
- Trump admin drops appeal in AAUP et al. v. Trump
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- Faculty Join SB895 Rally to Save Science, Save Lives

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- UC-AFT

Topics

people are here with us today in the spirit of saying no TMT on Maunakea," Pua Case of Mauna Kea Education and Awareness told Hawaii News Now.

"Should the Thirty Meter Telescope be considered for the Caltech decommissioned site or back to the northern plateau, we are asking them to halt any further funding for the Thirty Meter Telescope and because they're the largest single donor funder. That's why we're here," Case said...

The petition comes as TMT is looking at another site on Maunakea. TMT's project manager told the UH [University of Hawaii] Board of Regents last month the project is looking at the site where the Caltech Submillimeter Observatory was decommissioned and removed in 2024. "We have taken a preliminary look of whether we can possibly build TMT on the decommissioned site scientifically, engineering-wise technically and we believe this is very preliminary, of course, and we believe we can," said Dr. Fengchuan Liu, TMT International Observatory project manager...

Full story at https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2026/06/27/tmt-opponents-deliver-petition-major-funder-california/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: CalTech, U of Hawaii, UC, UC Regents

Straws in the Wind - Part 398

From the Virginia Mercury: *Higher education leaders in Virginia and Ohio announced... that they will join forces to create a model for three-year bachelor's degrees, cutting the traditional timeframe of obtaining the credential by one year. The move reflects Virginia's strategic plan to better align higher education with student and employer needs and increase affordability. Currently, the laws in Virginia and Ohio require at least 120 semester credit hours to earn a bachelor's degree. By spring 2028, participating institutions are expected to propose two 90-credit degree programs.*

If successful, the 90-credit undergraduate degree would likely require legislative action, depending on how programs are structured. "Virginia's higher education institutions continue to lead the way in innovation, demonstrating a statewide commitment to ensuring higher education delivers on its value proposition to students and families," said Scott Fleming, the State Council on Higher Education for Virginia's executive director... "Colleges and universities throughout the country are already offering three-year degrees, but there is no national model. This effort will create new pathways for students to pursue their life and career goals while ensuring a rigorous education experience," he added...

Full story at https://virginiamercury.com/briefs/virginia-joins-initiative-to-create-three-year-bachelors-degree-model/.

From MassLive: *Massachusetts students can now earn a bachelor's degree in just three years, following a... by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Suffolk University and*

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Another Milliken Interview

TMT

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Straws in the Wind - Part 395

Ballot Clutter

This will be hard (but not impossible!) for the Re...

Merrimack College are the first Massachusetts institutions to receive approval from the state to pilot reduced-credit bachelor's degree programs. "The focus shouldn't be on the inputs, the focus should be on the outcomes," said Board Member Alex Cortez. "What we're trying to do ultimately is create effective pathways that are options for students to achieve their ambitions and their priorities as they individually define them, not us."

The board voted 10-2 to approve both programs, with one member abstaining. Suffolk in Boston will offer a 94-credit pilot bachelor's degree in Healthcare Administration and Innovation. Merrimack in North Andover will pilot 96-credit bachelor's degrees in psychology, communication, criminal justice and business administration. Each reduced-credit degree will include general education requirements and fewer elective courses.

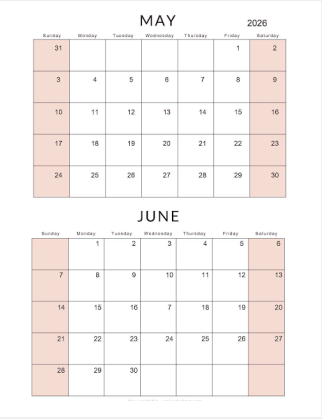
Three-year bachelor's degrees, which typically require around 90 credits instead of the standard 120, remain a subject of debate in higher education. These programs allow students to complete their degree without summer classes. To some higher education leaders, the reduced-credit bachelor's degree is needed to attract more students as the value of higher education faces scrutiny and sticker prices continue to climb. But others fear it will create a two-tiered system of learning and won't be accepted by employers and graduate programs, putting those students at a disadvantage...

Full story at https://www.masslive.com/education/2026/06/students-can-now-complete-a-3-year-bachelors-degree-in-mass-heres-where.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Two Months of the Guv



As blog readers will surely know, Gov. Newsom is termed out and running a not-a-campaign for president in 2028. And as blog readers will also know, we have tracked the governor's activities and preserved them, along with other relevant happenings since the pandemic. We used to do this tracking on a quarterly basis but the governor has been so very busy, especially with his not-a-campaign, so we have shifted to bimonthly collecting.

You can find the videos we preserved for May and June at:

https://archive.org/details/newsom-may-june-2026.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, politics

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 179

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From the Harvard Crimson: *The Faculty of Arts and Sciences' sweeping staff restructuring has, at long last, reached Harvard College. In a June 30 College-wide webinar, College Dean David J. Deming unveiled a new administrative structure that would dismantle the Office of Student Services, revive a version of the Freshman's Dean Office, and consolidate major undergraduate services into a smaller set of umbrella offices...*

Deming also confirmed that College staff will be expected to work in person five days a week beginning this fall, a change first reported by The Crimson that has already drawn pushback from staff and union organizers... [The] changes are part of an FAS task force's push to cut staffing costs as the school works to close a $365 million estimated structural deficit... Administrators did not provide a specific timeline for summer layoffs, which could affect up to 25 percent of FAS staff...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/7/7/fas-restructuring-reaches-college/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Thursday, July 9, 2026

No Change?

From the Daily Cal: *A study released by UC Berkeley's Center for Studies in Higher Education found a correlation between the release of ChatGPT in 2022 and an increased share of A grades for classes with take-home assignments at a selective public university in Texas. However, Berkeleytime data collected by The Daily Californian found no equivalent trends at UC Berkeley. Between 2019 and spring 2026, A's at UC Berkeley consistently stayed between 30% and 35%, with a dip during the COVID-19 pandemic likely due to increased pass/no pass courses.*

The study, authored by Igor Chirikov, a senior researcher and director of the Student Experience in the Research University Consortium at the Center for Studies in Higher Education, analyzed 500,000 grades from 2018-25 and found that the share of A grades increased by 13 percentage points at the Texas university. "The pattern shows grades rising mainly where students can use AI on unsupervised take-home work," Chirikov said in an email. "This strongly suggests that AI is substituting for student effort rather than improving underlying skills."

While the study found that grades have been increasing in classes with lots of take-home assignments, grades across UC Berkeley have remained relatively stable. The Daily Cal scraped more than 30,000 course grades beginning in the summer of 2019 from Berkeleytime to assess grade trends at UC Berkeley compared to the university in the study...

► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

Josh Hug, a professor in the electrical engineering and computer sciences department, has found that the amount of AI-generated work submitted by students has increased considerably, but said grades have decreased. In EECS and computer science courses, some classes' failing grades have more than doubled in the spring 2026 semester. Professors attributed the increase to an increased reliance on AI, a lack of math preparedness and understaffing within classes.

"The reason is that they're still getting full scores on the assignments, but they're doing much worse on exams," Hug said. To adapt to AI, Hug has been incorporating frequent in-class quizzes, oral check-ins and "diagnostic questions" on exams. Hug reuses questions from past exams and compares the performance between the two groups of students. "I have found that students do far worse on these problems than they used to, which is my biggest piece of evidence that they don't quite know what they're doing in the way they used to," Hug said.

...History professor Mark Brilliant has run into similar challenges, with students especially struggling with writing...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/academics/uc-berkeley-shows-no-signs-of-ai-grade-inflation-as-professors-adapt/article_6da85b38-889f-4f80-835a-88cc54a81662.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: plagiarism, UC-Berkeley

Straws in the Wind - Part 397

From the Spokesman-Review: *Nine Eastern Washington University majors – including urban and regional planning and gender, women's and sexuality studies – will be discontinued following two unanimous votes by school leadership... The decision, made by the board of trustees following recommendations from the provost and president, comes after months of petitions, public testimonies and official faculty recommendations in favor of continuing the degrees, including a visit from Spokane Mayor Lisa Brown in February in support of the women's studies program.*

The programs discontinued include master's degrees in interdisciplinary studies and applied math; and bachelor's degrees in data science, English as a second language, applied technology, gender, women's and sexuality studies, international affairs, urban and regional planning, applied technology, and early childhood and special education... Provost Lorenzo Smith initially identified the nine programs for review based on their graduating an average of under 10 students annually over the past five years (or, five graduates, in the case of master's programs)... Smith recommended to President Shari McMahan that all nine programs be discontinued, citing consideration of stewardship, resource allocations, strategic value, student demand, course demand and institutional mission...

Full story at https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2026/jun/26/ewu-trustees-vote-unanimously-to-end-gender-studie/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Eastern Washington U

Avoid Hacking: Just say no

The New York Times recently ran an op ed titled "**It's Inevitable — You're Going to Get Hacked.**" Here is an excerpt:

I run a public relations company, and there is one type of crisis no amount of planning can allay. It might start like this: One of my clients — imagine the founder of an A.I. start-up — receives notice that her iCloud account is about to be deleted because the payment method is no longer valid. Her assistant, who has access to her devices, calls her so he can update the payment method, and asks for her two-factor authentication code. The founder reads off the code. Moments later she's locked out of her iCloud. Her text messages, photos, her videos, voice memos and notes-to-self — all stolen. The founder calls me in a panic.

How could this happen? The founder's passwords could have been compromised and listed on the dark web. With the help of artificial intelligence, the hackers can send the fake nonpayment notice, clone her assistant's voice using videos posted on Instagram and enter the two-factor authentication code to break into her iCloud account. Then, they could demand a Bitcoin ransom to return the trove of personal musings, sexts and photos, perhaps some sans clothes.

This scenario is not as far-fetched as it sounds. Apple has some of the strongest security measures in tech and is constantly innovating new defenses, but in recent months it has repeatedly warned its customers of sophisticated scams. Gmail break-ins are proliferating. Hackers are subjecting even everyday people to embarrassing leaks. Once they get into your iCloud account, they could have access to your entire digital history dating back to your first iPhone...

Full op ed at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/02/opinion/hacking-ai-leaks-shame.html.

These scenarios involve people giving away information. If you get an email, text, or phone message asking for anything - such as a password - DON'T GIVE IT, no matter how urgent the request seems to be, or how trustworthy the messenger seems to be. DON'T DO IT. Just say NO. And use multifactor authentication where it is offered.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: email fraud

Wednesday, July 8, 2026

Good Health to You

From the Daily Bruin: *UCLA will offer a minor in health humanities starting this fall. The minor, housed under the comparative literature department, is an interdisciplinary program that examines how health and medicine are shaped by literature, culture, history and social experience, according to the department's website.*

...Whitney Arnold, an assistant professor in the Department of Comparative Literature, said the department created the minor in response to students' interest in narrative medicine. The minor requires students to take seven courses, Arnold said, including three electives. There are 78 available electives across about 45 departments... Students must take either Comparative Literature 1H: "Introduction to Health Humanities," or Cluster 73: "All in Your Head? Brain, Bodymind, and Society," before formally declaring the minor... The minor will also include a research capstone, which will allow students to work with faculty experts to study broader topics in comparative literature or health humanities...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/06/25/ucla-comparative-literature-department-to-offer-health-humanities-minor-in-fall.

Note: The minor was originally announced as an option for students in March. See: https://humanities.ucla.edu/news/health-humanities-minor-human-stories/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 396

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Florida Board of Governors... took a step toward barring undocumented students from admission to the state system's 12 public universities. A proposed rule, discussed... by the board's academic affairs committee, would block these students from enrolling, unless institutions already admitted "all academically qualified applicants," starting in the 2027–28 academic year. The committee adopted a version of the proposal, but the rule still needs approval from the full Board of Governors. The rule would be a blow to thousands of noncitizen students in the state. An estimated 8,000 undocumented students graduate from high school in Florida annually, and over 49,000 undocumented students are enrolled in Florida colleges, according to the Higher Ed Immigration Portal.*

While current students wouldn't be affected, new students would be blocked form enrolling if they're "present in the United States unlawfully," according to the current proposal. The committee lightly tweaked the proposal's language to clarify students studying online at Florida universities from other countries would be permitted to do so...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/state-policy/2026/06/26/florida-universities-could-ban-undocumented-students.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics, U of Florida

Our Quarterly Reminder

There is an alternative way to read the blog. Each quarter, we preserve pdf files of the blog which can be read and/or downloaded. In the pdf format, however, video and audio files cannot be seen or heard directly, although you may find links to the sources. But the pdfs do provide a kind of backup to the blog.

At one time, there was a program available that put the quarterly files in a book format. Unfortunately, that option no longer is available.

You can find the second quarter of 2026 files at:

https://archive.org/details/ucla-fac-assn-blog-2nd-qtr-2026/0-content%202nd%20qtr%202026/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 178

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard plans to install additional security cameras around academic buildings and undergraduate residential areas, expanding a campus security push that administrators privately linked to the fatal shooting at Brown University and to possibly enforcing Harvard's rules on campus protests.*

Faculty of Arts and Sciences spokesperson James M. Chisholm confirmed... that Harvard plans to add cameras around academic buildings and in the River and Quad residential areas. In a statement, Chisholm wrote that planned installations are part of Harvard's "regular process" of assessing and updating its security infrastructure. But in an April 30 email to members of the Student Services Undergraduate Advisory Board — a group of students who provide feedback

to College administrators on the undergraduate experience — Dean of Student Services Michael P. Burke directly tied the planned camera installations to security concerns raised by the Brown shooting... Burke wrote that the new cameras may also be a response to "crime investigation and possibly even campus use rules enforcement."

Harvard enacted University-wide campus use rules in summer 2024 after months of pro-Palestine student protests across the College and graduate schools, including a 20-day encampment in Harvard Yard...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/7/6/harvard-to-add-security-cameras/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: Brown University, Harvard

Yale Deal - Part 2

From the NY Times: *The dean of Yale Law School and some members of its faculty are trying to stop a settlement between the university and the Trump administration, warning that an agreement could jeopardize Yale's independence, according to two people familiar with the deliberations. The dean, Cristina M. Rodríguez, and a group of law school faculty members have quietly lobbied top Yale leaders in recent days, arguing that the Trump administration cannot be trusted and that settling would threaten the rule of law and the university's reputation. They have even explored whether the law school could be excluded from any settlement with the federal government.*

So far, Yale's leaders have continued to move forward with negotiations with the administration, according to one of the people. Yale's leaders have privately contended that they may need to strike a deal to ensure the university continues to receive federal funding, the person said. The Justice Department has been conducting an inquiry into Yale's admissions practices for undergraduate programs, its medical school and the law school, expanding the Trump administration's efforts to remake American higher education. The Justice Department has already accused Yale of illegal discrimination in medical school admissions. But the investigation into the law school has not been completed. Some at the school are recoiling over the prospect of settling before the government has accused Yale of wrongdoing — and before Yale has had a chance to contest any findings...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/07/us/yale-law-school-dean-trump-deal.html.

It might be noted that the law school is likely to be much less dependent on federal funding than the med school or other science-oriented departments at Yale. Prior blog coverage on this matter is at:

https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/07/yale-deal.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:01 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, diversity, health care, politics, Yale

Tuesday, July 7, 2026

Tomorrow at 9 AM

Top Things to do Before You Retire

JULY 8 AT 9 AM

THIS CLASS COVERS IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR RETIREMENT.

What will you learn in this seminar

A "to do list" to help you prepare for retirement, how to get your financial house in order, and other important considerations that can impact your decisions.

Who should attend?

Those who are planning to retire soon.

Go to:
https://fmr.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_W2IBuCQ2Q9qSBKUo7VOqMg#/registration.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: uc retirement

Straws in the Wind - Part 395

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Wisconsin Supreme Court unanimously ruled... that a state grant for minority students is unconstitutional... The ruling affirmed an appeals court decision in concluding that the Minority Undergraduate Retention Grant Program, established by the state legislature more than 30 years ago, violates the equal protection clause of the 14th*

Amendment. The program offered financial assistance to low-income Black, Native American, Hispanic or Southeast Asian students from Laos, Cambodia or Vietnam who came to the U.S. after Dec. 31, 1975.

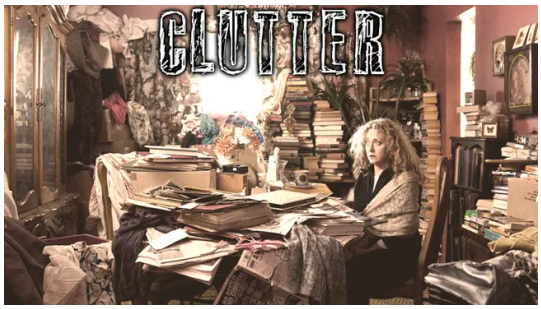
The case was brought by the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty on behalf of five people who objected to the program, including a couple who claimed their son couldn't access the scholarship because of his race. The Wisconsin Supreme Court said the individuals had standing as taxpayers... The case could have broader implications for race-based scholarships, many of which are disappearing or undergoing changes in the wake of state and federal bans on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/06/24/wisconsin-supreme-court-strikes-grant-minority-students.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics

Ballot Clutter



UC supported two bond measures for the November 2026 ballot: a research bond and a housing bond. As blog readers will know, only the latter made it. But there will be many other propositions on which to vote, a kind of ballot clutter.

There will be, for example, the billionaire tax and some measures designed to be poisoned pills for the billionaire tax. There will be much pro and against advertising on TV and social media. Groups that you might expect to be united for or against various propositions will be split this time in their support or opposition.

With all the confusion, some voters may be tempted to reject everything. But here is what will be offered:

Proposition 1: This $11.25 billion bond measure would fund veterans homeownership and affordable housing programs. The majority of that money, $10 billion, would finance programs to fund affordable rental housing and homeownership programs, and $1.25 billion would finance veterans housing programs. ***SUPPORTED BY UC.***

Proposition 2: This measure would double the amount the state is allowed to tuck away each fiscal year into its mandated "rainy day fund," from 10% to 20%. Gov. Gavin Newsom has endorsed the measure as "common sense" — a sentiment echoed by Democratic lawmakers, and panned by several Republican members.

Proposition 3: This measure would make permanent voter-approved income tax rates for high earners set to expire in 2031. Backed by several California teachers unions, it would make permanent the tax revenues going toward K-12 schools and community colleges.

Proposition 4: Candidates running for public office would be able to use select public funds when campaigning, if this Democrat-led measure passes. It would not allow candidates to use funds earmarked for education, transportation or public safety, and would set expenditure and use limits.

Proposition 5: This measure would effectively split the current recall process into two. Instead of requiring voters to choose a replacement for the official they are voting to recall, the measure would create a separate election of the official's replacement.

Proposition 37: This measure would use up to $25 billion in bonds to offer eligible California buyers fixed-rate mortgages for up to 17% of the purchase price of a qualified new home, if they make less than 200% of the area median income.

Proposition 38: This measure would authorize $8.4 billion in state general obligation bonds for immunology and immunotherapy research. (Some of the money would go to UC.)

Proposition 39: The Republican-backed measure would require voters to present government-issued identification at the polls, or to include the last four digits of a government-issued identification number when voting by mail.

Proposition 40: The Billionaire Tax Act would impose a one-time, 5% wealth tax on anyone worth more than $1 billion. It is backed by a powerful union of healthcare workers, but has splintered other unions as well as the Democratic Party. Republicans, meanwhile, are united in their opposition.

Proposition 41: This is one of two measures meant to counteract the billionaire tax. Backed by billionaires, it would ban new state taxes that are excluded from the state's spending limit.

Proposition 42: This is another measure seeking to neutralize the billionaire tax would ban new taxes on personal property and other financial assets, and prevent new taxes from taking effect retroactively — a key element of the billionaire tax proposal. The measure is being bankrolled by several billionaires who'd be directly impacted by the billionaire tax.

Proposition 43: In a deal struck between the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and legislators June 25, the measure would increase the voter threshold for citizen-led initiatives for new special taxes, from a simple majority to two-thirds. That high bar would make it virtually impossible for local governments to pass new taxes that would go toward a specific purpose.

Proposition 44: The measure, backed by the SEIU-UHW — the healthcare worker union behind the billionaire tax — would require health clinics to spend 90% of their revenue on patient services.

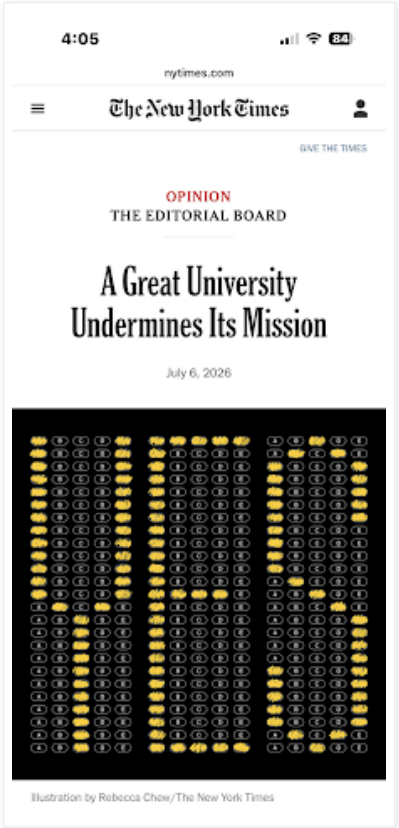
Proposition 45: The measure would amend the state's broad California Environmental Quality Act to expedite environmental review of most housing, transportation, health and energy construction projects, and set new limits on courts' ability to rule on project approvals.

Descriptions from the San Francisco Chronicle:
https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/california-ballot-measures-22319723.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC

This will be hard (but not impossible!) for the Regents to Ignore



From the Editorial Board of the **NY Times**: *Seven years ago, the University of California system appointed an 18-member committee to study the use of standardized tests in its undergraduate admissions. The committee included professors from all 10 campuses and a range of disciplines. They spent a year studying the issue and published a 225-page report full of evidence and recommendations.*

The committee concluded that scores on the SAT and ACT, the main standardized tests for college admissions, did a better job measuring student readiness for college than high school grades. High test scores were particularly good at finding talented students from low-income families and underrepresented minority groups. For these reasons, the committee recommended the system continue to require applicants to submit SAT or ACT scores.

The university's leaders disregarded the report. A few months after its release, early in the Covid-19 pandemic, the system's Board of Regents voted to stop using the tests in undergraduate admissions. Initially, the university planned to make the submission of SAT and ACT scores optional, as many other colleges did during the pandemic. Almost immediately, though, the University of California began refusing to accept SAT or ACT scores, even from students who wanted to submit them. The policy was known as "test blind." University leaders wrongly claimed that it would make admissions fairer and more equitable.

The results have been terrible... More than half of entering Berkeley students who took a math placement test incorrectly answered basic questions... Reading and writing skills have also deteriorated, and professors say they must spend time teaching elementary skills. "After the SAT was dropped, I got students who could not write a sentence," said Janet Sorensen, an English professor at Berkeley...

Hundreds of faculty members describe the situation as an emergency. More than 1,500 science and mathematics professors, including the chairs of more than 60 departments, have signed a letter asking the university to reinstate the test requirement. More than 700 humanities and social sciences professors have signed a similar letter... So far, the university's leaders are ignoring the faculty's plea for urgency. They instead plan to appoint a new committee to study the issue over the next year, saying they need more time to understand the data. This delay could lock in the current policy until 2029 because students tend to take the SAT and ACT during junior year of high school.

The university's trustees, known as the regents, have the final word. When they next meet, on July 14, they should have the courage to admit they made a mistake six years ago and reverse it... Even Janet Napolitano, who was the university president in 2020 and recommended a test-blind policy then, now favors its reversal. "It was a worthwhile experiment," she told us, "but as the results come in, it is increasingly clear that the experiment needs to be revisited."

...When the regents meet this month, they will face a choice. They can acknowledge their error and restore the test requirement, or they can adopt a classic bureaucratic dodge and appoint yet another committee to study a problem that has an evident answer.

Full editorial at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/06/opinion/university-california-sat-testing-admissions.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC Regents

Monday, July 6, 2026

Novel Regent

Los Angeles Times

ENTERTAINMENT

FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026 • LATIMES.COM/ENTERTAINMENT

Author finds inspiration in a rich Native history

Tribal chairman and casino mogul opens up about discovering his lineage at 30, overcoming exclusion and the visionary who inspired 'The Last Human Bear'

Usually, stories about UC regents don't appear in the Entertainment section. But Regent Greg Sarris is an unusual exception.

From the LA Times: *On a Monday morning in California, Sarris sits in his sleek office at the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria in Rohnert Park. Sarris, 74, has served as chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria for more than 30 years. In his office, diplomas and academic certificates crowd the walls. A framed poster for the 2023 film "Joan Baez: I Am a Noise" hangs nearby — she's a close friend. Behind him, an American flag ripples in the distance outside the window, blurred by the summer heat. Just up the road sits a multibillion-dollar tribe-owned casino, Graton Resort & Casino — a project the writer oversees. "I had never been in a casino. I have a PhD in modern thought and literature from Stanford," says Sarris.*

How does an accomplished author find himself at the helm of a multibillion-dollar casino enterprise? It's a question that still puzzles Sarris. "I told them if we can raise our people and become a platform for social justice and environmental stewardship to benefit Indian and non-Indian alike, I'll do it." ...

Before his stint as a reluctant casino mogul, Sarris was a prolific author and university professor at UCLA and Sonoma State. In 2023, he was appointed a regent of the University of California by Gavin Newsom. ***Over the course of his career, he published six books, and his novel "Grand Avenue" became an HBO original film in 1996****...*

In 1952, Sarris' teenage mother gave him up for adoption, her family hoping to evade the embarrassment of their Jewish daughter becoming pregnant by a Native American Filipino man. Sarris grew up in a white family in Santa Rosa alongside three siblings. His adopted father, George Sarris, became abusive, causing Greg to flee the house with his adopted mother's blessing. "God bless her. She let me go out and live on ranches and run with other people to get away from him."

At age 30, Sarris uncovered the identities of his birth parents and learned of his Native heritage. He learned his birth mother was buried in a pauper's grave at the Calvary Catholic Cemetery in Santa Rosa, with "nothing to mark her grave but an upside-down horseshoe that has her name in it." In the opening pages of the novel, a dedication to her: Bunny Hartman*...*

...The Graton Resort & Casino, launched by Sarris over 12 years ago, now plays a vital role in supporting the Pomo Indian community. "I promised early on: roof over everyone's head, an insurance policy in every pocket and a college degree paid for," he says. "We give $2.5 million a year in perpetuity to the University of California, so that all California Indians can go to the University of California tuition-free." The casino has funded theater programs, youth writing intensives and revenue sharing with neighboring tribes...

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/books/story/2026-06-24/graton-resort-casino-greg-sarris-native-history-author.

As blog readers will know, the feds are looking into Gov. Newsom's finances and those of his wife. It is unclear that anything illicit has been found. The California practice of "behested" payments, although not illegal, doesn't have a good look. Regent Sarris may be pulled into that issue. From the LA Times:

...In 2020, [Jennifer] Siebel Newsom founded the California Partners Project, a nonprofit focused on improving gender equity in the workplace and the safety and well-being of children in online spaces. She does not collect compensation from the nonprofit or serve on its board. It hosts an annual "gender equity summit" and provides resources for parents on issues such as social media safety and child mental health. The California Partners Project also does not publicly disclose its donors in its tax filings, but much of the nonprofit's funding appears to come from behested payments. Siebel Newsom does not receive a salary from the organization.

Since its founding, the Newsoms have steered more than $5 million to the nonprofit via behested payments, according to a review of the disclosures. While many donations to the California Partners Project come from charitable foundations, it also received hundreds of thousands from companies including Silicon Valley Bank, Pinterest and the charitable arm of Blue Shield of California.

Its biggest funder is the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, a Sonoma County tribe that operates a casino in Rohnert Park and spends heavily in state and federal elections. The tribe has given $2.3 million to the nonprofit since 2022. In June 2023, Newsom appointed tribal Chairman Greg Sarris to the University of California Board of Regents. Newsom has also supported efforts by the tribe to block a smaller tribe from building a casino in nearby Vallejo...

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2026-06-25/newsom-says-wife-is-target-of-trump-heres-what-we-know-of-her-finances.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, governor, politics, Stanford, UC, UC Regents

Straws in the Wind - Part 394

From Inside Higher Ed: *An 11th-hour change to Iowa legislation last month required almost all University of Iowa undergraduates to complete courses in American history and in American government. And the provision, which became law, said only the Center for Intellectual Freedom—the civics center Republican lawmakers previously created at the university—could offer these mandated courses, starting in fall 2028.*

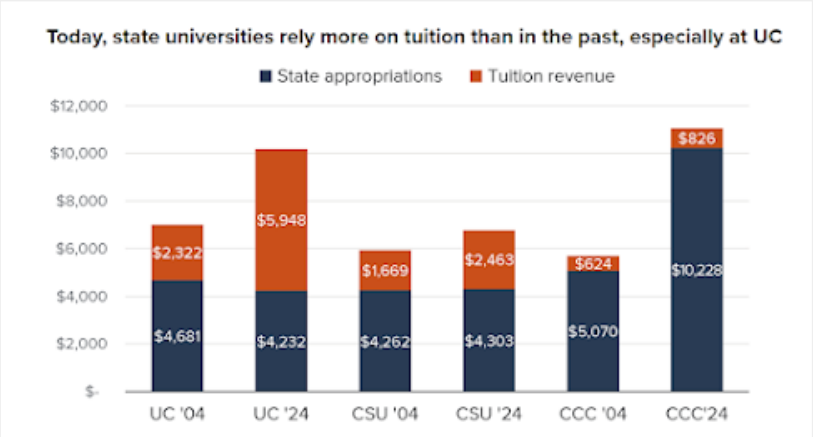
Now, the advisory council overseeing this civics center faces a logistical issue. The university had more than 22,000 undergrads this past spring, per the Iowa Board of Regents. And the civics center officially has just one faculty member: its interim director... The Iowa center's interim director, Luciano I. de Castro, said it only taught 19 students last semester in its two courses, Political and Economic Institutions of the U.S. and American Culture and Values. Now, the center needs to hire more faculty, or somehow get more affiliated instructors, to significantly expand its capacity, all while searching for a permanent director...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/state-policy/2026/06/24/iowa-civics-center-must-teach-thousands-it-has-one.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, U of Iowa

Just so you know...



Source: https://www.ppic.org/publication/higher-education-funding-in-california/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: community colleges, CSU, State Budget, tuition, UC

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 177 (Insecure)

From the Harvard Crimson: *Each time John F. Carbone Jr. started a shift, he said, Securitas asked him to confirm he had the equipment needed for the job: keys, a work phone, and a working radio. But for years, the 18-year Harvard security guard and union steward said he has*

signed in at posts across campus the same way: "no radio, no radio, no radio." The problem stretched across much of Harvard's undergraduate campus.

As of June 15, only 19 of the 49 radios required at Securitas Security Services posts across the Faculty of Arts and Sciences were operational, according to interviews with more than 15 Securitas employees and visits by The Crimson to more than two dozen posts. Thirty of the 45 sites staffed by Securitas had no functioning radios, leaving guards assigned to residential Houses, labs, and academic buildings without one of their most basic tools for emergency communication. The gaps were especially stark in undergraduate housing. Just four of the 14 radios required across Harvard's 12 Houses, DeWolfe, and Cronkhite were present when The Crimson conducted its inventory.

Two days after The Crimson completed that inventory, Securitas distributed radios to all 14 residential posts, according to a person familiar with the matter and two longtime Securitas guards. By Friday, nearly all FAS sites had a working radio...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/6/29/securitas-radios-gap/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Sunday, July 5, 2026

Baseball Question

As blog readers will know, UCLA has used the Jackie Robinson Baseball Stadium on the nearby VA property for team games. At various points, its use of the stadium was in question. That issue seems to have quieted down.

However, the LA Times recently carried an article about lack of law enforcement in the newly-built VA housing (with its increased veteran population). Apparently, the LAPD does not have jurisdiction, the LA County Sheriff is nominally in charge but operates out of West Hollywood and doesn't show up, and VA's own police department is focused on just the VA hospital. As a result, there has been a climate of lawlessness and lack of responsibility.*

It was unclear from the article who - if anyone - provides security at the stadium when it is in use by UCLA. Does UCPD have jurisdiction? It might be a good idea to clarify who is in charge before there is an unfortunate incident.

===

*https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2026-06-26/in-law-enforcement-desert-hundreds-of-disabled-veterans-are-moving-in.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 393

From the Detroit News: *The University of Michigan plans again to offer the choice to apply for "early decision" admissions, a binding commitment to the school for applicants, despite a request by the university's Faculty Senate to reevaluate the option. Nearly three-quarters of the Faculty Senate — more than 1,300 members — approved a resolution in April that said the admissions practice gave an unfair advantage to students from "affluent" families, and the university adopted the practice without conversations with faculty and staff. The resolution was moved by Chemistry Professor Neil Marsh. The Faculty Senate asked the university to "immediately halt" early decision admissions pending "broad and substantive consultation" to determine whether it aligns with the educational values of UM. The request came as the university encountered issues with the rollout of the early decision program.*

Early decision is a college application option commonly used at elite, mostly private institutions. It "binds" prospective students to enroll if they receive acceptance offers. The practice is meant to benefit those students who are entirely committed to the university, because once the offer is made, the student is expected to immediately enroll and rescind all applications at other universities...

Generally speaking, students from wealthier families are most likely to benefit from the early decision program... Applying early decision is off-putting for those who depend on financial aid...

Full story at https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2026/06/24/university-michigan-early-decision-admissions-faculty-pushback/90559687007/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, U of Michigan

New Berkeley Institute

From the NY Times: *The University of California, Berkeley, will open an institute named for former Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the San Francisco Democrat who rose to become the first woman to lead the House and one of President Trump's most ferocious adversaries. Campus officials are billing the institute as a nonpartisan, academically rigorous operation focused on the tending of American democracy. But the announcement comes as the university faces extraordinary pressure from the Trump administration, which has spent months pelting the campus with investigations...*

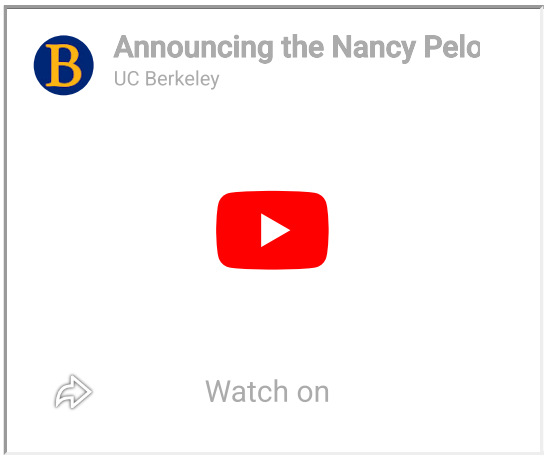
The institute's emergence comes as dozens of schools have started civics programs. Many are in Republican-controlled states and are often perceived as having a conservative bent. Centers in places like North Carolina and Ohio regularly focus on Western civilization and civil discourse, with supporters hoping that they will act as counterweights to academic cultures many conservatives view as ideologically intolerant.

...Ms. Pelosi insisted that she viewed her role in the institute as "almost an emancipation from partisanship." ...Although some details are still being discussed, Berkeley officials said they expect the institute to offer undergraduate students a public leadership track that will begin as a certificate program and could someday evolve into a major or a minor. The institute, also slated

to include a visiting fellows program and research opportunities, will feature a course taught by Ms. Pelosi and Eric Schickler, a U.C. Berkeley professor who has written extensively about Congress and who said he was eager to test political science theory against Ms. Pelosi's in-the-room recollections. Berkeley said it had already raised $35 million for the institute. The university declined to identify the donors, but Ms. Pelosi, among the wealthiest members of Congress, said she would be contributing and helping with fund-raising...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/29/us/berkeley-pelosi-democracy.html.

Announcement video:

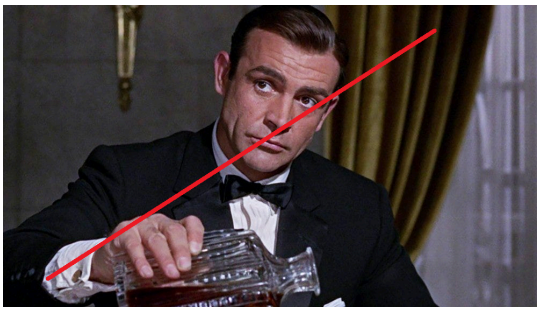


Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nkww2gWKbbc or https://ia601802.us.archive.org/14/items/newsom-may-june-2026/UC-Berkeley%20Pelosi%20Institute%20for%20Representative%20Democracy%206-29-2026.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: fund raising, politics, UC-Berkeley

No Bond?



From the Bruin: *A UC-sponsored California bill that would place a $12 billion research bond on the ballot will not appear in the November election, unless lawmakers reach an agreement. Senate Bill 895, which Democratic state Sen. Scott Wiener proposed in January, would have created the California Foundation for Science and Health Research. The foundation would have distributed the $12 billion – accumulated through the sale of state bonds – to scientific research projects across the state.*

The bill made it through several legislative hurdles – passing a senate committee and then the chamber in May – but failed to make it to the State Assembly floor by the June 25 deadline for measures to qualify for the ballot. The bill had to pass in the Assembly and be signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom by June 25 to qualify through the standard legislative timeline. However, it could still qualify if the state grants an extension...

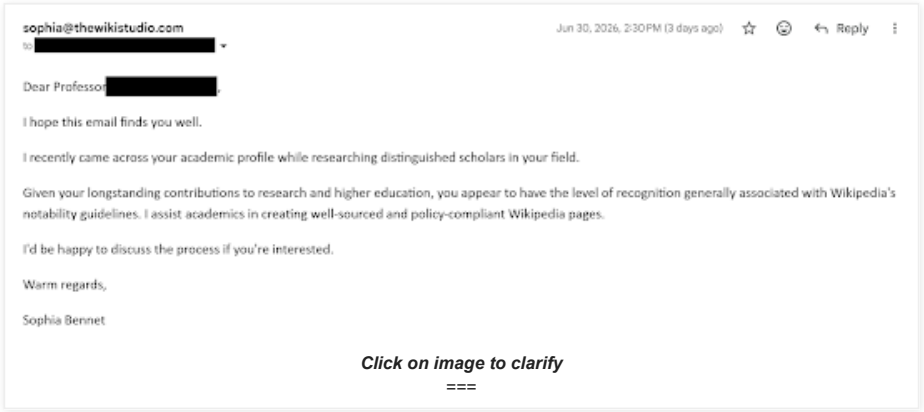
UC President James Milliken said in a Thursday statement that he will continue to advocate for research support from the state. "Placing a bond on the ballot is always an ambitious undertaking — particularly so in California's current fiscal environment," he said in the statement...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/07/03/12-billion-uc-sponsored-research-bond-misses-deadline-to-appear-on-ballot.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: legislature, Milliken, politics, UC

Ignore - Report - Delete



sophia@thewikistudio.com
to [redacted]

Jun 30, 2026, 2:30PM (3 days ago) Reply

Dear Professor [redacted],

I hope this email finds you well.

I recently came across your academic profile while researching distinguished scholars in your field.

Given your longstanding contributions to research and higher education, you appear to have the level of recognition generally associated with Wikipedia's notability guidelines. I assist academics in creating well-sourced and policy-compliant Wikipedia pages.

I'd be happy to discuss the process if you're interested.

Warm regards,

Sophia Bennet

Click on image to clarify
===

Just a reminder that unsolicited offers to create a (presumably flattering) Wikipedia page for you should be ignored. You can report them to Wikipedia by forwarding them to:

paid-en-wp@wikipedia.org

If you do so, you will receive an email from Wikipedia saying:

Thank you for reporting this. There are many paid editing companies out there that look through recently-declined drafts or who contact people with public careers and contact information (like **academics and professors)** to send this kind of solicitation. Very few of them comply with Wikipedia's paid-editing policies, most are outright scams, and none are endorsed by Wikipedia, no matter what they may say. Feel free to ignore future emails like this, and we recommend marking them as spam.

Sincerely,

331dot

The conflict of interest volunteer response team

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:01 AM No comments:

Labels: email fraud

Saturday, July 4, 2026

250

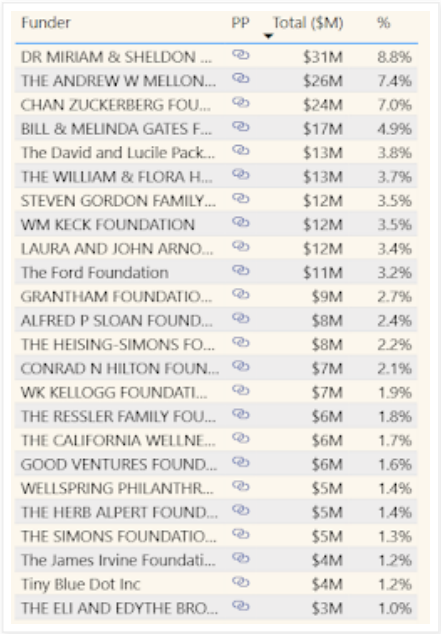
Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNaOAm5E-6w or https://ia902809.us.archive.org/1/items/newsom-7-1-2026-savings-accounts-for-kids/250%20Years%20of%20American%20History%20in%209%20Minutes.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:50 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Donor Database

The American Enterprise Institute has created a database called "Source" of foundations that donated to universities based on reports they filed with the IRS. There are all kinds of caveats attached to the database. For example, the reports were voluntary for a time and later became required.



Funder	PP	Total ($M)	%
DR MIRIAM & SHELDON ...		$31M	8.8%
THE ANDREW W MELLON...		$26M	7.4%
CHAN ZUCKERBERG FOU...		$24M	7.0%
BILL & MELINDA GATES F...		$17M	4.9%
The David and Lucile Pack...		$13M	3.8%
THE WILLIAM & FLORA H...		$13M	3.7%
STEVEN GORDON FAMILY...		$12M	3.5%
WM KECK FOUNDATION		$12M	3.5%
LAURA AND JOHN ARNO...		$12M	3.4%
The Ford Foundation		$11M	3.2%
GRANTHAM FOUNDATIO...		$9M	2.7%
ALFRED P SLOAN FOUND...		$8M	2.4%
THE HEISING-SIMONS FO...		$8M	2.2%
CONRAD N HILTON FOUN...		$7M	2.1%
WK KELLOGG FOUNDATI...		$7M	1.9%
THE RESSLER FAMILY FOU...		$6M	1.8%
THE CALIFORNIA WELLNE...		$6M	1.7%
GOOD VENTURES FOUND...		$6M	1.6%
WELLSPRING PHILANTHR...		$5M	1.4%
THE HERB ALPERT FOUND...		$5M	1.4%
THE SIMONS FOUNDATIO...		$5M	1.3%
The James Irvine Foundati...		$4M	1.2%
Tiny Blue Dot Inc		$4M	1.2%
THE ELI AND EDYTHE BRO...		$3M	1.0%

The image accompanying this post shows the top donors to UCLA during 2009-2024, defined as those who provided at least 1% of total database-listed donations to UCLA during that period.

It is possible to use the Source database to isolate shorter periods and purposes of the grants.

You can find the database at:

https://cfau.aei.org/source/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: fund raising, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 392

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Kansas Board of Regents... formally defined the terms "DEI" and "CRT," paving the way for state-mandated curriculum changes that will eliminate gender-, race- and ethnicity-focused courses from general education requirements at public universities. Free speech advocates called the definitions "vague and confusing" and say they leave faculty and students "on shaky ground." Public university faculty have mixed feelings on the definitions. Some said they could have been worse, and others said they pave the way for serious infringements on academic freedom.*

In compliance with House Bill 2513—which passed the Legislature in March and which Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly grudgingly signed—the board of regents defined "DEI-CRT" as "diversity, equity, inclusion and critical race theory" and stated that a DEI-CRT course is one whose "title, course description or learning outcomes include DEI-CRT-related content." That content is defined as anything which "intentionally establishes and promotes the preferential treatment of groups based on race, color, gender, ethnicity or national origin," according to board documents. CRT content also includes anything that "presents racism as systemic within laws, policies, or institutions and promotes acceptance of that viewpoint rather than presenting it as a subject of scholarly, historical, or legal study." Discussion of race, racism or the history of the civil rights movement is not considered DEI-CRT–related content under the policy...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty/academic-freedom/2026/06/24/some-kansas-faculty-uneasy-over-vague-dei-definitions.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Kansas State U, politics, U of Kansas

Members Needed

Below is a message from the outgoing University Club (formerly Faculty Club) president Steve Cederbaum:

Dear Members of the Club and Members of the UCLA Family,

This is my last letter as I finish my term as Chair of the Board of Directors of the UCLA University Club. I will miss the responsibility for the success of the Club, but I will have the chance to continue to participate in its growth. I have been appointed to the ex officio seat on the board as the representative of the UCLA Emeriti Association. I leave with no qualms as I turn over the Chair to Kyle McJunkin, from the School of Public Health. Kyle is an visionary leader, full of energy and ideas, some of which I will share with you in a moment.

As I have written previously, each of us can share in the success of having stabilized the Club and assuring its continuation into the future. We will finish the year with little or no operating deficit, and we are free from the risk of closure in these fraught financial times. This success has come at a price. That price has been the curtailment of some money losing perks that we previously enjoyed. We have had to forego hot luncheon service this summer (to be discussed in a separate communication), we have no a la carte service on the patio in the Coral Grill, and

no dinner service. We are taking steps to restore and enhance our member benefits, and Kyle will share this information with you soon.

I want to use the remainder of this communication to share with you the steps required to restore the Club to the full-service organization that we want. The short answer is money, the longer one requires a discussion of how we get there.

WE NEED MORE MEMBERS! Membership dues provide a base of support that is independent of usage. If we want a Club to be there when we want it, whether it is a university club, a social club, or a club associated with a religious institution, we have to assume some responsibility for its existence. This responsibility cannot be measured solely by the return that we get from our investment. Our membership numbers suffered greatly from the forced closure due to Covid and the desperately needed extensive renovations that took the following year. We are now at 60% of our pre-Covid membership levels. For those members who never returned when we reopened, we need you back. For those who are using the club with a departmental card, we need the larger contribution of full membership. Membership dues support some of the Club activities that have been curtailed. We need more members to provide more services.

Second, we need more events. It is these events that provide the economic health and cushion of the enterprise. Most of these events will come from the outside, but each of you can help by reminding your departments and your family and friends of the special meaning and atmosphere of the UCLA University Club. It is and should be more than an economic decision.

Finally, we need to continue to seek major philanthropic support for further capital improvements to the facility. The University stepped in with $10 million for major structural improvements, but we are responsible for improvements to the interior. We have spent, or will soon spend about $2 million on major improvements to the kitchen, the servery, the bathrooms, and others thanks to the generosity of the Morrisons, the Miller/McMahons, and the Steeles. We need still more upgrades, like the carpet in the main dining room and we need to meet emergencies which will continue to arise in our 60-year-old facility.

I want to appeal especially to the generosity of my generation, recruited to UCLA in the 60s, 70s and 80s of the last century, who often through little effort of our own, may have accumulated resources sufficient to consider major philanthropic gifts. If you are in that position, consider the UCLA University Club as a beneficiary. Your gift can have an immediate, visible impact on something very close to home and your heart. If you are interested you can contact me (scederbaum@mednet.ucla.edu), or the incoming chair, Kyle McJunkin (kmcjunkin@ph.ucla.edu).

I thank you again for having given me the privilege of having served as the Chair of the Club board for this past year.

Steve Cederbaum
Chair, Board of Directors
UCLA University Club
===
It might be noted that back in the day, this blog helped save the Faculty Club from total demolition by rallying support. (The original plan was to build a version of what is now the Luskin Hotel and Conference Center on the site of the Club. You can get a sense of what went on by typing "Faculty Club" into the search option for this blog and going back to 2010 and 2011.)

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: faculty center, UCLA

Interview

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement

UC President James Milliken was interviewed by Michelle Deutchman, director of the UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement. Topics included Clark Kerr and the Master Plan for Higher Education, campus protests, academic freedom, recent reports on problems in higher education, and the conflict with the Trump administration.

You can hear the interview at:

https://archive.org/download/newsom-may-june-2026/UC%20Pres%20Milliken%20interviewed%20by%20Michelle%20Deutchman%206-30-2026.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Master Plan, Milliken, politics

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